

the

RED CUP Q&A



separating alcohol fact from fiction
EVERY TUESDAY IN THE DAILY WILDCAT

Q How can I help my friend stop smoking when she drinks? She says she wants to stop but has an urge to smoke when drinking because she says it gets her more drunk.

A. Thanks for your willingness to help a friend. One place to start is to cut off her supply. Suggest she not buy them or bum them from friends at parties. Out of sight, out of mind can work if there's no addiction. If she smokes out of boredom at a party, then engage her in other activities such as dancing, games, conversation. Distraction is a key component to success here. The time to have the conversation with her is when she's sober. This may sound counterintuitive, but ask her why she doesn't smoke when she's not drinking. You can support her reasons for not smoking instead of feeling like you're nagging her to quit. Ask her to set up a "contract" that she'll agree to you intervening at a party if she finds her resolve weakening; then steer her away from the smokers' group at parties as that could lead to goal relapse. Let her know some facts:

- Smoking weekly can lead to getting hooked
- Increases health risks if she's taking birth control pills
- Smoking damages your lungs and circulatory system
- Second-hand smoke hurts your friends

College smokers are more likely to be non-daily smokers, meaning that they smoke more in social situations when compared to their non-college peers (Drug and Alcohol Dependence, 2010).

Studies with rats show that combining alcohol with nicotine creates an inflated release of dopamine in the reward center of the brain, more than either substance used alone. This supports the suggestion that it feels rewarding to smoke while drinking (Alcohol & Alcoholism, 2007). She may want to consider whether her alcohol consumption plays a role in how much she smokes.

Remember, the Arizona Smokers Helpline is free.
ashline.org/help



wildfact

Only 15% of UA females used tobacco in the past 30 days. (Among students, more males smoke than females) (2012 Health & Wellness Survey, n=2,406)



Got a question about alcohol?

Email it to redcup@email.arizona.edu



www.health.arizona.edu

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